PENDILLS/SULLIVAN CREEK

NFH NEWSLETTER

Our Mission

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

A vision of Fisheries Program that hatcheries directly address is to conserve aquatic species through recovery programs for threatened and endangered fish and mussel species, maintenance of fish health, restoration of native inter-jurisdictional species and management of aquatic nuisance species.

Our Facilities

Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery (NFH) is located along Lake Superior, approximately 17 minutes west from Brimley, Michigan. Pendills Creek NFH is a lake trout production facility and was established in 1951 to stock the Great Lakes. Lake trout are raised from eggs, and are reared for approximately 14 months, then are released into Lake Michigan. Currently, Pendills Creek is able to raise approximately 1 million lake trout each year.

Sullivan Creek National Fish Hatchery (NFH) is 15 miles west of Brimley, located south of M-28, on US Forest Service Road 3134, which is branched off of US Forest Service Road 3131. Sullivan Creek NFH was established in 1934 and is a lake trout brood stock facility. The brood stock at Sullivan Creek are from wild parents, and are maintained to provide approximately 5-7 million eggs each year for hatcheries to continue the restoration efforts.

Our complex is located in the Midwest Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (US FWS) within the Department of Interior. There are 6 hatcheries within our Region that play a valuable role in restoration/rehabilitation of native fish, mussels and other aquatic species around the Great Lakes.

Visiting our Facilities

Pendills Creek NFH is open for tours during business hours (7 am to 3 pm). For group tours, please call for an appointment, by calling (906) 437-5231 to schedule an appointment.

Sullivan Creek NFH provides tours by appointment only. Please call Pendills Creek to schedule an appointment.

Filtration System Improvements

Pendills Creek NFH recently scheduled upgrades and improvements to its drum filters and traveling screen. During the winter months when debris and foliage coming down the creek is at a minimum, this provides an optimum time to make necessary repairs and maintenance to both filter systems. Water Management Technologies (WMT) completed the drum filter and backwash pump upgrades to Pendills Creek water filtration system. Other improvements included replacing the drum roller wheel bearings with easier to maintain grease zerk fittings, installing a spray skirting, and replacing a drum drive motor. The traveling screen and rotating drum filter systems remove tons of leaves, wood debris, suspended solids, and most aquatic life from both Videan's and Pendills Creeks. Videan's Creek, the primary source and Pendills Creek, the secondary source both provide Pendills Creek the necessary water to raise lake trout housed in raceways downstream.

Fish Biologist Tim Falconer and Biological Science Technician Randy Obermiller took this opportunity to clean the traveling screen basin. They removed over 10 cubic yards of sand, silt, and debris which had accumulated in the basin since the initial installation of the traveling screen in 2010. Maintenance Mechanic John Shuman redesigned the spray bar on the traveling screen for easier removal and cleaning. Shuman also performed preventive maintenance on the system including lubrication, inspection, and adjusting the tension on the water screen belt.

Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery, founded in 1951 is located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula near Brimley, MI on Lake Superior. The facility rears yearling lake trout to be released into the Great lakes as part of the Great Lakes Restoration Program. Hatchery production includes over 1,000,000 fish released into Lake Michigan each spring.

- *Randy Obermiller*
Biological Science Technician

Coded Wire Tag Retention Study

During August 2013, a group of workers descended upon the Pendills Creek NFH to begin using automated tagging trailers to clip the adipose fins and insert a tiny metallic tag into the snout of our juvenile Lake Trout. These Lake Trout are destined for locations within Lake Michigan and have codes unique for each area of fish planting. Later, when the fish is caught, the code can be examined and interesting facts can be determined about where the fish came from, not only which hatchery, but also when and where it was stocked, and the strain of fish.

PENDILLS/SULLIVAN CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY

A few weeks into the calendar year 2014, Tim Falconer, Fish Biologist stationed at Pendills Creek NFH was checking the fingerling fish in our raceway building for the purpose of checking the effectiveness of the automated tagging trailers. When the use of these automated trailers was in it's infancy, the efficiency was not the greatest, either the tag was not being placed in the fish or the fin was not getting clipped, which signifies to fisherman at a later date that there is something special about that fish, or the fish was not being clipped or tagged at all. Through constant improvements, the percentage of fish that received both the tag and the fin clip has improved and as of this sampling the total percentage of fish that were both tagged and clipped was almost 96%.

The process of checking the fish for Coded Wire Tag retention consists of collecting 100 fish per tag code, anesthetizing the fish, checking visually for the adipose fin to determine if it was clipped or not, and swiping the fish through a machine that detects small changes in the magnetic field. A tagged fish will beep and a red LED will light up on the detector, which is shaped like a box with a wedge cut out of it allowing the sensors in the sides or wings to detect the magnetic changes due to the tag in the fish's snout. The fish are then released back into the raceway they came from where they revive from the anesthetic within a few minutes time.

- Tim Falconer
Fish Biologist

Fish Culture Class Tours Pendills Creek NFH

During the month of April 2014, students from Lake Superior State University's (LSSU) Fish Culture course toured Pendills Creek NFH. The students and the instructor were very interested in the hatchery's water treatment processes used to improve our water quality. Many of the students were well versed in the knowledge of fish culture from working in LSSU's Aquatic Research Lab (ARL) where they raise Atlantic Salmon.

It turned out to be a great day to witness the Pendills Creek water treatment process in action. It had rained in the morning, and by the warm afternoon the snow melt was stirring up the creek. The tour started at the hatchery water supply intake, where the water looked like chunky iced coffee. Then the tour moved downstream to the traveling screen building where the students saw how the screen removes large debris from the incoming water. Next was the drum filter, where the finer particles in the water get filtered out down to 90 microns. After the drum filter is the Ultra Violet Disinfection (UV) system, which uses UV light to kill any pathogens that might be hiding in the water. Finally, the Low Head Oxygenators (LHO's) which add supplemental liquid oxygen to the processed water. The end result of all this water treatment was examined when the tour entered the production building and the water in the raceways looked like fresh brewed tea. The one thing the water treatment process does not do is change the color of the water. The next stop was the fish pump used to load the large fish distribution truck and the 3,300 gallon tanker itself, which many found quite unique. The tour then proceeded to the tank room where students viewed lake trout fry and asked any final questions before schooling back up onto the university bus.

As knowledgeable as many of the students were on fish culture, hatchery personal said that if they got bored with Atlantic Salmon, they could come and work with Lake Trout for a while if they had time, but nobody would bite on the offer!

- James Anderson
Fish Biologist

News/Updates from Hatcheries

During the quiet period just before field season, our facilities have been attending meetings, completing training (in-class and on-line) and providing tours to our local community college and university. Curt Friez attended a Retirement Seminar in Bismarck, ND in March. Julie Timmer attended the several Federal Records Training sessions in Chicago, IL in April. Curt and Julie both attended the Great Lakes Fisheries Team Meeting in Green Bay, WI in April. Julie and Curt provided a tour of Pendills Creek NFH to Bay Mills Community College in April as well.

Pendills Creek and Sullivan Creek are currently announcing two job positions for Youth Conservation Corps this summer. Deadline for application submission is May 15, 2014. For further information regarding these openings, please contact the hatchery (see end of newsletter for telephone number and an e-mail address).

- Julie Timmer
Administrative Officer

PENDILLS/SULLIVAN CREEK NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY

Updates from Friends of Pendills Creek Hatchery

Friends of Pendills Creek Hatchery have been busy soliciting for donations for their 6th Annual Children's Fishing Event to be held on June 7, 2014. Flyers have been delivered to local schools, and on both FPCH's and Pendills and Sullivan Creek NFH Facebook pages. It will also be advertised in local newspapers. For further information regarding the event, contact Pendills Creek NFH at 906-437-5231.

FPCH has also been working on expanding their outreach efforts via social media accounts. They took over Pendills & Sullivan Creek NFH's Flickr account, www.flickr.com/photos/pscnfh, and recently created a Facebook page. And last but not least, they are working on a website. Currently, their website address is https://sites.google.com/site/friendsofpendillscreek/. They are working on developing a domain for the site. Stay tuned for updates.

- Julie Timmer
Administrative Officer

US FWS Pendills Creek National Fish Hatchery
21990 W Trout Lane
Brimley, MI 49715
(906) 437-5231

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Newsletter Editor: Julie Timmer (Julie_Timmer@fws.gov)